



University Policy Statement

UPS 411.600

POLICY ON SERVICE LEARNING

POLICY

To provide high quality programs that meet the evolving needs of our students, community and region, California State University, Fullerton provides opportunities for its students to learn from external communities through service learning activities. The Center for Internships and Community Engagement or designated unit personnel is responsible for oversight of this policy. All related documentation shall be maintained for a three-year period after completion of student service-learning activities.

GUIDELINES

Service learning is separate and distinct from internships (See UPS 411.601), which seek to integrate academic work from an entire major with practical experience in work settings relevant to that discipline. Service-learning activities clarify, illustrate or stimulate additional thought about academic topics covered in the classroom, as well as encourage students to develop or strengthen a habit of service to the community.

Courses are designated as service learning on a section by section basis. Whether a course is designated as a service-learning course is determined when the course instructor completes the Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) Tool provided by the CSU Chancellors Office, Center for Community Engagement. Courses that are determined to meet criteria to be service learning by the CEL Tool, in consultation with Center for Internships & Community Engagement staff, will be coded in the course catalog and designated by the Scheduling Office as service learning.

Site approval and annual review processes are coordinated by the Center for Internships and Community Engagement or designated unit personnel and shall include assessment of educational appropriateness, identification of potential risks and appropriate site supervisor, evaluation of the educational environment, relationship of service activities to course goals, placement criteria, and signed placement activity agreements.

Criteria for necessary site visits are established by the Office of Risk Management. Before participating in service-learning activities, students must be provided with conduct expectations, health and safety instructions, and emergency contact information. They must also provide their own emergency contact information and submit a learning agreement form signed by themselves, their site supervisor, and course instructor.

Signed placement agreements between service-learning sites and California State University Fullerton must be on file and address student responsibilities as well as the role of the internship site and CSUF.

To be offered for academic credit, service-learning activities must:

- (a) Constitute a component of a university course and be described in a syllabus; credit may be granted only for activities so described and approved by the instructor in advance;
- (b) Integrate community and classroom learning;
- (c) Meet community needs and be identified in conjunction with community-based organizations or sites approved through the Center for Internships and Community Engagement by designated unit personnel;
- (d) Provide structured opportunities, including writing assignments, for students to reflect on the connections between their service experiences and the course objectives;
- (e) Account for no more than one-third of the course work and grade;
- (f) Match a student's academic preparation, specify selection criteria if applicable, and include an accommodation plan for students with special needs;
- (g) Occur only at sites evaluated and approved by the course instructor;
- (h) Provide an emergency response plan;
- (i) Involve no more than forty hours of community service per semester unit of credit per three-unit course (for example, forty hours would be the appropriate amount of community activity on which to base one-third of the grade for a three-unit class, or twenty hours for one-sixth of the grade). In most circumstances, students should be evaluated on their ability to integrate the academic and community experience, not merely on their ability to satisfy the required amount of community activity; and
- (j) Provide an opportunity for the student, community supervisor and the instructor to assess the service-learning experience provided by the activity.

Source: Internships & Service Learning Committee

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